

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	The Hegemony of Political Power underlying the Development of Supra-State Institutions
Author of the thesis:	Patrick O'Brien
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr. Martin Riegl, PhD.

Remark: It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	17
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	19
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	18
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	16
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	18
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	88
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)	1

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).

1) Theoretical background:

The author based his research on theory of Social Constructivism (structuration theory). Also the neorealist position is analyzed. The paper also argues that regional hegemons (within regional groupings and institutions) tend to operate according to Pareto-Maximizing strategies. It must be noted that this is undoubtedly relevant approach, however there are numerous other theories explaining regional processes (especially the EC). Beside outside - in theories (like systemic theories analyzing links between hegemony and regionalism) and functional theories perceiving supranational institutions as the most effective means of solving common problems, there are also domestic-level theories, which would deserve author's attention. The author also partially tackles the issues of sovereignty, nation-state and other notions.

2) Contribution:

The author has chosen an interesting and difficult topic "The Hegemony of Political Power underlying the Development of Supra-State Institutions", which was popular after the end of the Cold War, when scholars tried to explain the new wave of regionalism or so called neo-regionalism. He also focused his paper on the interdependent role of nation-states, transnational corporations, and the development of supra-state institutions. The thesis itself analyzes the development of the European Monetary Union and steps of the World Bank during 1990s. Overall the author provided objective analysis the above mentioned topic.

3) Methods:

The author decided to apply Giddens' concepts of structuration. He also used historical analyses in order to explain regional processes of institutional structuring.

4) Literature:

The author managed to collect extensive amount of resources (including neorealist and structuralist authors) of all kinds and proves her ability of independent research. On the other side I would recommend to analyze articles of authors like L.Fawcett (Regional organization and international order), K.Ohmae (The rise of the region state), W.W.Rostow (The coming age of regionalism) and many others.

5) Manuscript form:

The submitted thesis fulfills are formal criteria required by the Faculty of Social Sciences. It consists of seven chapters including introduction and conclusion. Total length of the thesis is 73 pages. Despite of minor shortcomings and misspellings it meets the standard.

DATE OF EVALUATION:

Referee Signature

The referee should give comments to the following requirements:

1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts omitted? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently incorporated with the topic and hypotheses tested?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

2) CONTRIBUTION: Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the policy implications well founded?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

3) METHODS: Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further verification and testing? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or irrelevant detours off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 10 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

4) LITERATURE REVIEW: The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way and disposes with a representative bibliography. (Remark: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**). If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

5) MANUSCRIPT FORM: The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate language and style, including academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading	US grading
81 – 100	1	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	2	= good	= B
51 – 60	3	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	3	= satisfactory	= D
0 – 40	4	= fail	= not recommended for defence